1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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Hill Maria

Chapter IX

Domestic Life; Miscellaneous

A. Treatment of Sickness

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758 Amongst the Hindus of the plains the Hill Maria has a great but totally undeserved reputation for his skilful use of herbs and roots to treat the sick. A few chronic sufferers may be met who have migrated to the Abujhmar hills in the fond hope of getting their sufferings mitigated by Maria medicine; they will readily tell you that the Marias were more ignorant than they themselves, though some have stayed on, finding the simple life and the climate of the hills tonic in themselves. Actually, the helplessness of the Hill Maria in the face of the simplest injury or ailment is pathetic. A simple sore beginning from a thorn in the buttock is neglected, till the whole buttock becomes one vast sore. The commonest and worst disease among them is, or was, yaws; whole households suffered, and many for the moment apparently free bore on their persons obvious indications that it was only a matter of time before the disease would reappear in the secondary or tertiary state. Innumerable cases came to my camp doctor for treatment in my 1930 tours. I sent him again in the summer of 1930 to tour in the area, and of 280 cases treated by him in 26 villages, 79 were yaws cases; in his next tour in the same villages, 69 new yaws cases were brought to him. Later tours were undertaken by him and other doctors for injecting yaws patients with salvarsan preparations, with great success; in my March 1934 return visit to this area I did not see one case, and everywhere the villagers were profuse in their thanks for deliverance from the scourge, for which they had known no antidote or alleviative. It is common also in the hilly parts of the Bison-horn country, and in the lower Indrawati and Godavari valleys, where the Bastar dispensaries get many a yaws patient from the Chanda and East Godavari districts of British India.

164 Syphilis is extremely rare among the Hill Marias; the 280 cases already mentioned as treated in summer 1930 did not include one case of venereal disease. Where it is common in Bastar the carriers have invariably been either police constables and forest guards or Rohilla and Telugu traders. Hill Marias have luckily been comparatively immune from the attentions of minor State